OUTROS TÍTULOS DE INTERESSE:

História da Construção – Os Construtores
Arnaldo Sousa Melo e Maria do Carmo Ribeiro (coord.)

História da Construção – Os Materiais
Arnaldo Sousa Melo e Maria do Carmo Ribeiro (coord.)

História da Construção – Arquiteturas e Técnicas Construtivas
Arnaldo Sousa Melo e Maria do Carmo Ribeiro (coord.)

Evolução da paisagem urbana: sociedade e economia
Maria do Carmo Ribeiro e Arnaldo Sousa Melo (coord.)

Evolução da paisagem urbana: transformação morfológica dos tecidos históricos
Maria do Carmo Ribeiro e Arnaldo Sousa Melo (coord.)

EVOLUÇÃO DA PAISAGEM URBANA
CIDADE E PERIFERIA

COORD.
MARIA DO CARMO RIBEIRO
ARNALDO SOUSA MELO

CITCEM
CENTRO DE INVESTIGAÇÃO TRANSDISCIPLINAR
CULTURA, ESPAÇO E MEMÓRIA

FCT
Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia

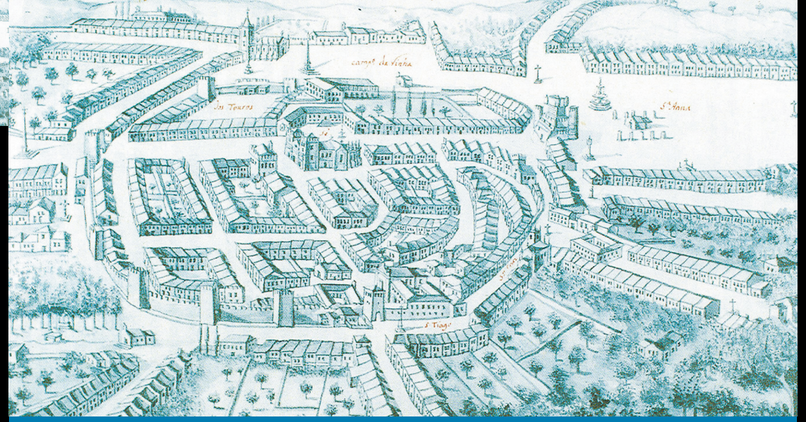
Universidade do Minho

JEM

ACB ASSOCIAÇÃO COMERCIAL DE BRAGA 150 anos

FCT
Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia

EVOLUÇÃO DA PAISAGEM URBANA
CIDADE E PERIFERIA
COORD.
MARIA DO CARMO RIBEIRO
ARNALDO SOUSA MELO



EVOLUÇÃO DA PAISAGEM URBANA
CIDADE E PERIFERIA

COORD.
MARIA DO CARMO RIBEIRO
ARNALDO SOUSA MELO

JEM
INSTITUTO DE ESTUDOS MEDIEVAIS
FCSH/NOVA | FCT

CITCEM
CENTRO DE INVESTIGAÇÃO TRANSDISCIPLINAR
CULTURA, ESPAÇO E MEMÓRIA

MARIA DO CARMO RIBEIRO
Professora Auxiliar do Departamento de História da Universidade do Minho, Investigadora do CITCEM e da Unidade de Arqueologia da Universidade do Minho. Doutorada em Arqueologia, na especialidade de Arqueologia da Paisagem e do Território, pela Universidade do Minho. A sua investigação tem-se centrado nas questões de urbanismo, morfologia urbana, arqueologia da arquitectura e história da construção.

ARNALDO SOUSA MELO
Professor Auxiliar do Departamento de História da Universidade do Minho, Investigador do CITCEM. Doutorado em História da Idade Média pela Universidade do Minho e pela École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris. O seu campo de investigação incide sobre a sociedade, economia, poderes e organização do espaço urbano medieval, em particular a organização do trabalho e da produção, incluindo a história da construção.

EVOLUÇÃO DA PAISAGEM URBANA
CIDADE E PERIFERIA

COORD.
MARIA DO CARMO RIBEIRO
ARNALDO SOUSA MELO

CITCEM
CENTRO DE INVESTIGAÇÃO TRANSDISCIPLINAR
CULTURA, ESPAÇO E MEMÓRIA

IEM
INSTITUTO DE ESTUDOS MEDIEVAIS
FCSH/NOVA | FCT

FICHA TÉCNICA

Título: **Evolução da paisagem urbana: cidade e periferia**

Coordenação: Maria do Carmo Ribeiro e Arnaldo Sousa Melo

Figura da capa: Mapa de Braga (Finais do século XVII), *Forum*, 15/16, Jan-Jul 1994, p. 23

Edição: CITCEM – Centro de Investigação Transdisciplinar «Cultura, Espaço e Memória»

IEM – Instituto de Estudos Medievais (FCSH – Universidade Nova de Lisboa)

Apoios: UAUM – Unidade de Arqueologia da Universidade do Minho
FACC – Fundo de Apoio à Comunidade Científica – Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia
ACM – Associação Comercial de Braga

Design gráfico: Helena Lobo www.hldesign.pt

ISBN: 978-989-8612-09-0

Depósito Legal: 379190/14

Conceção gráfica: Sersilito-Empresa Gráfica, Lda. www.sersilito.pt

Braga, setembro 2014

O CITCEM é financiado por Fundos Nacionais através da FCT-Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia no âmbito do projeto PEst-OE/HIS/UI4059/2014

SUMÁRIO

CITY AND SUBURBS: LONDON 1400-1700

MATTHEW DAVIES[1]

Writing in the late sixteenth century, the chronicler John Stow reflected nostalgically upon the city of London and the changes that he had lived through. Describing the parish of St Botolph Aldgate, on the eastern fringes of the city, he remembered one street (Hogg Lane) which:

> had on both sides fayre hedgerowes of Elme trees, with Bridges and easie stiles to passe ouer into the pleasant fieldes, very commodious for Citizens therein to walke, shoote, and otherwise to recreate and refresh their dulled spirites in the sweete and wholesome ayre, which is nowe within few yeares made a continuall building throughout, of Garden houses, and small Cottages; and the fields on either side be turned into Garden plottes, teynter yardes, Bowling Allyes, and such like, from Houndes ditch in the West, so farre as white Chappell, and further towards the East.[2]

Stow was observing significant changes that had occurred to the physical environment of London during his lifetime, of which one of the most important was the growth of the city's suburbs. Over the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries London expanded in size well beyond its Roman and medieval walls, becoming one of Europe's largest cities by 1700 with a population of approximately half a million people in the city and its expanding suburbs.[3] London in this period has been the subject of many academic studies, with historians reflecting on themes such as crime and disorder, manufacturing, the guilds, charity and welfare, all of

---

[1] CMH, Institute of Historical Research, School of Advanced Study, University of London.

[2] J. Stow, *A Survey of London, Reprinted from the text of 1603* (London, 1912), p. 116.

[3] V. Harding, 'City, Capital and Metropolis: the Changing Shape of Seventeenth Century London', in *Imagining Early Modern London: Perceptions and Portrayals of the City from Stow to Strype, 1598-1720* ed. J.F. Merritt (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 117-143; V. Harding, 'The population of London, 1550-1700: a review of the published evidence', London Journal, 15 (1990), pp. 111-128.

which have necessarily been studied in the context of this dramatic and inexorable expansion.[4] This paper will reflect on some aspects of this physical expansion, drawing upon the results of research undertaken by the Centre for Metropolitan History in three major projects run between 2008 and 2011. The research focussed on the development of one of London's major suburbs – Aldgate – and the changes it underwent from the fifteenth century to the end of the seventeenth. The projects employed a combination of methodologies, using longitudinal sources such as parish registers in combination with cross-sectional sources such as tax records in order to explore the characteristics of the population and the built environment over this period.

To begin with it is useful to understand the broader context of the research, and in particular to sketch out the main changes that occurred in London's population and physical fabric between c.1400 and c. 1700. The second part of this paper will look in more detail at the suburbs, and especially at the largest and fastest growing suburb of London to the east of the medieval city, examining some of the patterns in the development of housing in the area, both in terms of topography and construction. The paper will present some findings about this area of the city, but also what they might tell us about the nature of the physical expansion of the city as a whole in terms of housing and topography.

I. LONDON'S DEMOGRAPHIC AND GEOGRAPHICAL GROWTH 1400-1700

The Black Death of 1348/9, and subsequent outbreaks of plague, reduced London's population from an estimated 80,000 to around 40,000 inhabitants. The population remained at about that level until the early to mid sixteenth century, when in-migration (always an important component in London's demographic history) began to increase, alongside other signs that a period of stagnation in the population was coming to an end – for example increases in the frequency of complaints from the guilds about the impact of migrants on employment opportunities and markets. Until the middle of the sixteenth century, therefore, the population of London was mostly contained within its Roman/medieval walls, with some ribbon development along the main roads leading out of the city, as Braun and Hogenberg's depiction of the city shows. (see Figure 1). Much of this development still in fact lay within the formal legal boundary of the city, which

[4] For overviews see V. Harding, 'Early Modern London 1550-1700', *London Journal*, 20 (1995), pp. 34-45; J. Boulton, 'London 1540-1700', in *Cambridge Urban History of Britain II*, ed. P. Clark (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 315-46.

Fig. 1. The City of London, c. 1550, in G. Braun and F Hogenberg, *Civitates Orbis Terrarum* I (1572)

extended beyond the city walls (of Roman origin), and so many of the city's 100+ parishes and 25 wards lay wholly or partly outside the walls. To the west of the city, for example, the jurisdiction of the mayor and aldermen ended at Temple Bar, one of the formal structures set up to mark the limits of the city of London. Those outside the city's formal jurisdiction lived in parishes within the counties of Middlesex, Essex, Kent and Surrey. Near-contemporary views such as that by Braun and Hogenberg's, and the so-called 'Agas' map, show clearly the limits of the physical development of London by the middle of the sixteenth century. Aside from the houses built along the main roads, there was plenty of open space, some of it (especially to the north and east) being used for market gardening, noxious industrial processes such as butchery, and for activities such as the drying of fulled cloth on 'tenter' frames.[5]

London's institutional geography was an important factor in the development of areas outside the city walls. In particular, the city was home to religious houses of many different kinds, including houses of the principal religious orders, friaries, hospitals and almshouses. As in other European cities, many of these were located on

[5] For the 'Agas' map see http://mapoflondon.uvic.ca/ [date accessed: 25 May 2014].

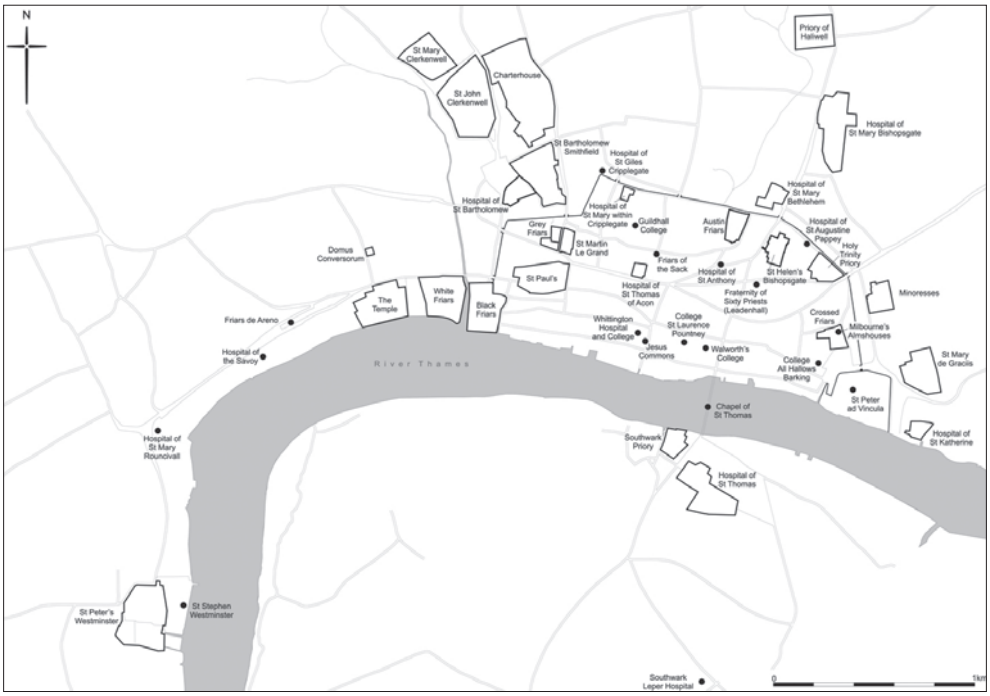


Fig. 2. The precincts of London's religious houses overlaid in a GIS on to the city's principal streets. Created by Museum of London Archaeological Service, and published in *The Religious Houses of London and Middlesex*, ed. C. M. Barron and M. Davies (London, 2008).

the periphery of the city (Figure 2) and in other cases they were physically established within city wards and parishes, though they enjoyed jurisdictional privileges that meant that they were not subject to the governance of the mayor and aldermen.[6] Until their dissolution during the Reformation they were an important influence on the physical development of the suburbs, partly through processes of building and redevelopment of the religious houses themselves, and partly because of the local and wider influence that they acquired as landholders and as consumers of goods and services. Westminster Abbey, in particular, was an important source of demand for goods and services, but so too were other religious houses on the periphery of the city.[7] During the Reformation, the religious houses were seized by the Crown and given or sold to noblemen, Crown officials and others who variously knocked them down or redeveloped them. A good example was the redevelopment of the

[6] *The Religious Houses of London and Middlesex*, ed. C.M. Barron and M. Davies (London, 2008).

[7] See for example B.F. Harvey, 'Westminster Abbey and Londoners,1440-1540', in *London and the Kingdom: essays in honour of Caroline M. Barron*Barron, ed. M. Davies and A.J. Prescott (Stamford, 2008), pp. 12-37.

former Blackfriars (Dominicans), on the western fringe of the city. Some years after the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII, the site of Blackfriars was granted to a royal servant, Sir Thomas Cawarden (d. 1559) who was Master of the Revels (entertainments for the court). The buildings then became the location for the Revels Office, where most of the costumes, sets and other paraphernalia were stored.[8] After Cawarden's death the buildings were sold and, appropriately, became the site for Blackfriars Theatre, one of the new playhouses that were springing up in the last decades of the sixteenth century.[9]

The same was true, albeit in a more localised way, of the Inns of Court. These were the 'universities', so to speak, for those wishing to enter the legal profession, and were located along the main routes to the west of the city – the Strand and Holborn. Like the religious houses, they were 'liberties' and so were not subject either to the jurisdiction of the city or of the local parish or crown authorities in the county of Middlesex. Occasionally this caused problems for the local authorities, and there were instances of 'town' versus 'gown' disputes involving young men of the Inns of Court and local inhabitants.[10] The Inns of Court themselves were located along a built-up 'corridor' that connected the City of London with Westminster, the seat of royal power and location of the English parliament and law courts, and of Westminster Abbey, burial place of many English kings. Unlike many other capital cities, London itself was physically separated from the centre of royal government in the medieval and early modern periods. However, as Derek Keene and others have emphasised, London's importance to the English state and its pre-eminence over other urban centres was very pronounced: whether in the financial muscle of the city and its merchants, its importance in setting standards of production, or indeed in the symbolic role it played on ceremonial occasions such as coronations and royal marriages.[11] Westminster itself was a small town, dependent in many ways on both London and on the royal institutions – so in that sense it can be called a suburb.[12] The royal institutional presence in London was augmented by the Tower of London to the east, and also by the establishment, in the fourteenth

[8] 'Cawarden, Sir Thomas'. http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/cawarden-thomas-1514-59. [date accessed: 25 May 2014];

[9] See A. Feuillerat, *Blackfriars Records, c. 1555-1609*, Malone Society Collections, 2 (Oxford, 1913; repr. 1985); J. Q. Adams, 'The Conventual Buildings of Blackfriars, London, and the Playhouses Constructed Therein', *Studies in Philology*, 14 (1917), pp. 65-87.

[10] C.M. Barron et al. *The Parish of St Andrew Holborn* (London, 1979).

[11] See especially D. Keene, 'Metropolitan comparisons: London as a city-state', *Historical Research*, 76 (2004), pp. 459-80.

[12] G. Rosser, *Medieval Westminster* (Oxford, 1989).

century, of the 'Great Wardrobe' on the western edge of the city at Barnard's Castle, which supplied the King and his family and household with clothing.[13]

Southwark, to the south of the city of London was a complex suburb, in that most of it lay outside the City of London and for many centuries was divided into a number of different manors and jurisdiction – only one of which was under the control of the City of London. As a result, Southwark became a popular site for craftsmen wanting to escape the jurisdiction of the city of London's guilds. It was notorious for criminals and prostitution, and was especially popular as a place of residence for 'aliens' (non-English migrants) throughout the medieval and early modern periods.[14] In 1550 the City gained control of the whole of Southwark from the Crown, but it retained many social and economic characteristics associated with peripheral areas of cities in this period.

It was during the medieval period that some of the main characteristics of London's housing were established, notably those relating to houses with frontages on to main streets. These would remain largely unaltered until the eighteenth century, despite developments in building techniques and the availability and adoption of new building materials. Terraces of four- or five-storey houses, often built over stone cellars and surmounted by a garret, were the most common form of housing along streets, particularly in the city's wealthier districts, such as Cheapside – which was London's premier market and shopping street (Figure 3). This area was the subject of a major research project carried out between 1979 and 1985, which produced detailed histories of every property in five central London parishes from the twelfth century to the Great Fire of London in 1666. The project demonstrated the potential for such reconstructions, based especially on the abundant evidence of property deeds held in London archives, as well as surviving fabric and archaeological investigations (Figure 4).[15] Sitting on plots four metres to six metres wide, houses along Cheapside could be easily employed for commercial uses by London's artisans and retailers, as well more simply as spacious domestic premises by wealthy occupiers. The plans of these houses followed a common pattern, but the allocation of rooms on upper storeys, and towards the rear of the

[13] See for example M. Hayward, *The Great Wardrobe Accounts of Henry VII and Henry VIII*, London Record Society, 47 (2012), introduction; Derek Keene, 'Wardrobes in the City: houses of consumption, finance and power', in M. Prestwich, R. Britnell and R. Frame (eds.), *Thirteenth-Century England VII* (Woodbridge, 1999), pp. 61-79.

[14] M. Carlin, *Medieval Southwark* (London, 1996).

[15] D. Keene, 'A new study of London before the Great Fire', *Urban History Yearbook*, 1984, pp. 11-21; V. Harding, 'Reconstructing London before the Great Fire', *London Topographical Record* 25 (1985). Full details of the project and its publications can be found at: http://www.history.ac.uk/projects/research/social-and-economic [date accessed: 25 May 2014].

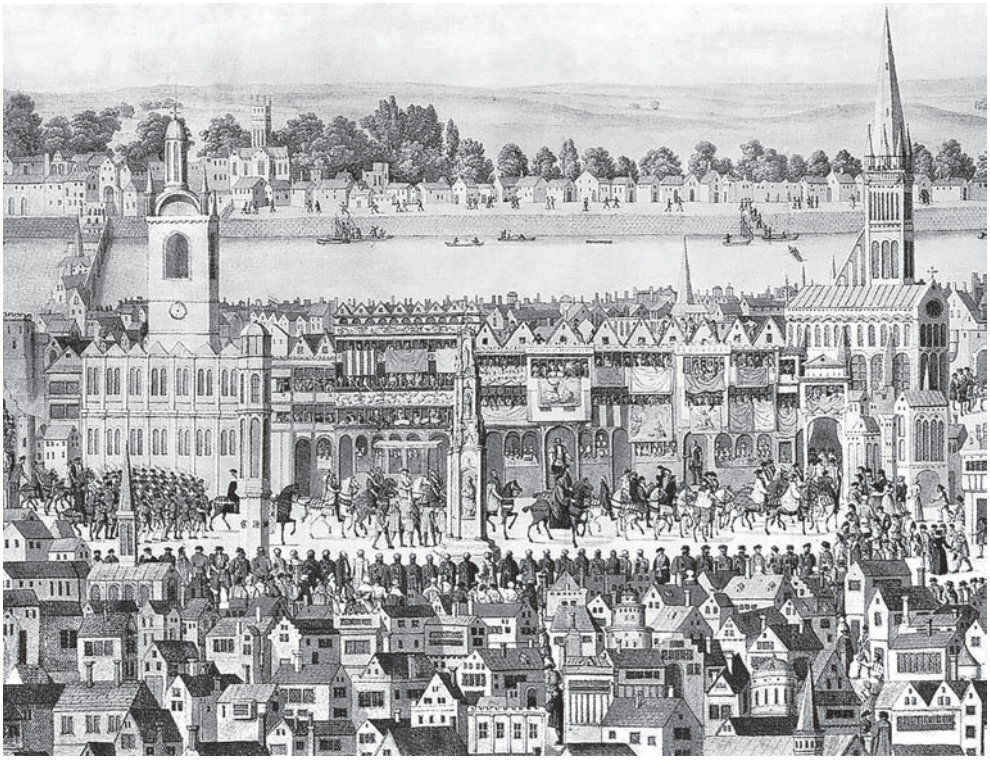


Fig. 3. Edward VI's Coronation Procession along Cheapside on 19 February 1547, the day before his coronation. Copy by S.H. Grimm (1785), of a contemporary mural at Cowdray House, Sussex, destroyed in 1793. Cheapside is shown from the north, with St Paul's Cathedral and its spire on the right and St Mary le Bow on the left. By permission of the Society of Antiquaries of London.

plot, or located in outhouses, could be complex and varied, leading to divisions and subtenancies held from different landlords. Houses at the rear of plots, and within alleys and courts, were usually smaller and had one or two fewer storeys.

Between the mid sixteenth century and the end of the seventeenth century, London was transformed into a metropolis, one of the largest cities in Europe. We can see the physical growth of the city in maps, some of the best evidence for documenting the development of London's suburbs (Figures 1 and 5). In 1550 London had a population of about 60,000, mostly confined to the area within the city walls. By 1700 it had risen to about 450,000 – a massive increase that was almost entirely the result of suburban expansion.[16] This took place despite the devastating impact of plagues and the Great Fire of 1666. By 1700 it contained nearly 10 per cent of England's population and much more than 10 per cent of

[16] Harding, 'The population of London, 1550 -1700: a review of the published evidence', pp. 111-128.

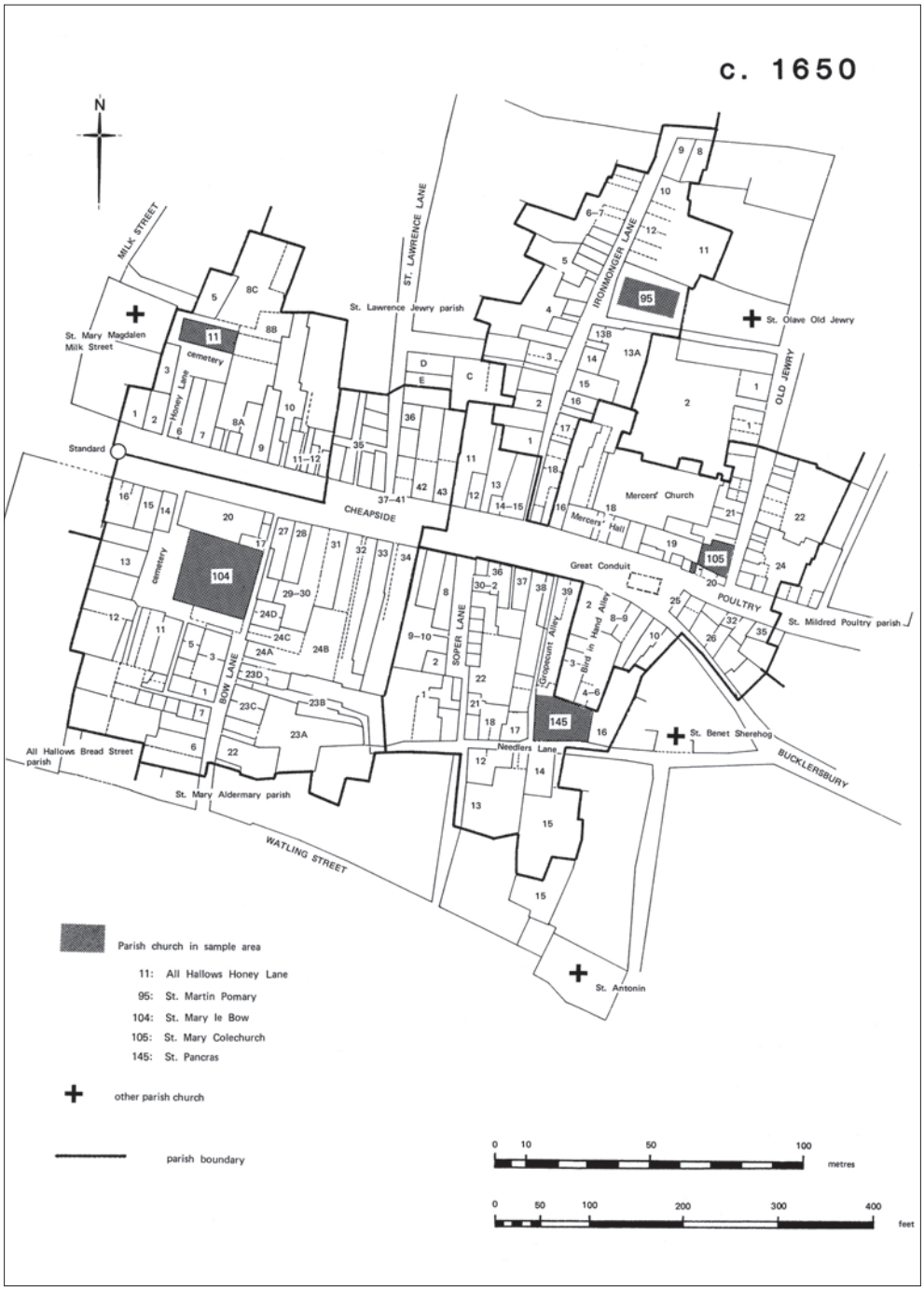


Fig. 4. The Cheapside study area, from the Social and Economic Study of Medieval London (1979-85). (Centre for Metropolitan History).

Fig. 5. W. Hollar, Prospect of London as it was flourishing before the destrvction by fire / A new map of the citties [sic] of London Westminster & ye Borough of Southwarke with their suburbs (1675). © The Trustees of the British Museum.

the nation's wealth. The population explosion was driven by migration from the English regions – apprentices were recruited by the guilds from many areas of the country, especially in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and there were many more who came to London seeking casual work as servants or labourers.[17]

The physical expansion of London was recorded on contemporary maps, and shows the manner in which John Stow's observations reflected the building over of green spaces and the filling in of gaps between main streets leading out of London into the countryside. Braun and Hogenberg's depiction of the city in the mid-sixteenth century can be compared with maps of the city that were surveyed a century later, and published in the 1670s such as that by Hollar published in 1675, but based on a survey completed before the Great Fire of 1666. (Figure 5). London's early modern growth, physical and demographic, was almost entirely suburban – the population of the city within the walls remained more or less static at approximately 100,000 to 115,000. The suburbs, by contrast, grew rapidly, initially along the main roads out of London but increasingly filling in the spaces

[17] For apprentices and migration see, amongst others, S.R. Hovland, 'Apprenticeship in later medieval London, (c. 1300 – c. 1530)', University of London PhD thesis, 2006; S.R. Rappaport, *Worlds Within Worlds: structures of life in sixteenth century London* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 76-78; Jacob F. Field, 'Apprenticeship Migration to London from the North-East of England in the Seventeenth Century', *London Journal*, 35 (2010), pp. 1-21; and see publications on this topic by Patrick Walls: http://www.lse.ac.uk/researchandexpertise/experts/profile.aspx?KeyValue=p.h.wallis%40lse.ac.uk [date accessed: 25 May 2014].

Fig. 6. W. Hollar, Bird's-eye plan of the west central district of London, with Lincoln's Inn Fields at the top right the Covent Garden piazza left of centre, Holborn along the top, St Martin's Lane along the left, and the Thames from the Savoy to Essex Stairs at the bottom (1660/6). © The Trustees of the British Museum

in between. New development was occurring on all sides of the City. Some of it was planned and designed to create new kinds of spaces, such as urban squares for the wealthy. Figure 6 is a 'birds-eye' depiction by Hollar of the Covent Garden area of London, to the west of the city and close to the legal quarter. The image shows the newly laid out streets, many lined with fine houses. This was a licenced and planned development built in the 1630s and 1640s, using brick rather than timber as the main material. The area began to attract retailers of high quality furniture and other goods, and was the home of what we might call the urban gentry. Hollar also engraved a view across the piazza towards the church where the grand houses of the gentry and aristocracy can be seen (Figure 7).[18]

These imposing planned estates were not typical, in the main, of the way in which London's suburban housing developed. That is not to say, however, that London necessarily reflected Sjoberg's concentric model in terms of wealth and

[18] See R. Malcolm Smuts, 'The Court and Its Neighborhood: Royal Policy and Urban Growth in the Early Stuart West End', *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (Apr., 1991), pp. 117-149.

Fig. 7. W. Hollar, The Piazza of Covent Garden (c.1647). © The Trustees of the British Museum.

housing – with poorer, smaller dwellings on the periphery. The reality was more complex, as historians such as Power and Guillery have demonstrated, with a mix of rich and poor, large houses and small, being characteristic of much of London's early modern suburban development. As Guillery points out,

> Other suburbs were and continued to be much humbler and messier … there was an interplay of timber and brick, proportionally variable in relation to the availability of brickearth or the proximity of timber wharves. There were also huge variations in the functional characteristics of domestic architecture, not just to do with size or frontage, but also in relation to intended occupancy, single or multiple, or whether the house included space for a shop or manufacturing.[19]

Power's principal conclusion, echoed by Guillery and others more recently, was that there were significant differences between the City and the nearby western suburbs (such as Covent Garden), and suburbs further to the east and south. Socio-economic differentiation was reflected, in many instances, in poorer quality structures, often rebuilt many times. There were attempts to control suburban building through legislation, including requirements to use materials such as brick rather than wood, but these laws appear not to have had much effect. Developments like

[19] P. Guillery, 'Houses in London's Suburbs', in *London and Middlesex Hearth Tax: Lady Day 1666*, ed. M. Davies, C. Ferguson, V. Harding and A. Wareham (British Record Society, 2014), pp. 134-47, at p. 139.

this were not licenced, and were small scale and speculative.[20] These conclusions prompt further research at local level, particularly given the potential of combining documentary sources with other kinds of evidence, including material remains, photographs and plans, in order to try to reconstruct some of the characteristics of suburban development.

II. CASE-STUDY OF LONDON'S EASTERN SUBURB: ST BOTOLPH ALDGATE

The effects of London's expansion on social conditions and the built environment have been the subject of important research projects and publications over the last four decades. Amongst the earliest was Michael Power's essay on housing in the East End of London, where he demonstrated the potential of taxation records, especially the Hearth Tax of 1666 to look at the characteristics of newly urbanised areas such as Wapping and Shadwell in the seventeenth century.[21] Micro-studies have been shown to be extremely useful in bringing together different kinds of evidence – material as well as documentary – to address these kinds of questions. The second part of this essay will focus on one particular suburb that has been the subject of recent very detailed study. This is the area of London known as Aldgate (probably from the Anglo-Saxon for 'old gate') and lies immediately to the east of the City walls. Figure 8 shows the area in relation to the city walls and the formal legal boundary of the city of London. The total study area is approximately 80 acres (32.3 hectares). In terms of jurisdiction, most of the area lay within the City of London's Portsoken ward, traditionally one of the poorest parts of the city. But a substantial proportion lay outside, in the liberty of East Smithfield which lay within the county of Middlesex. Together these areas made up the parish of St Botolph Aldgate.

The area is rich in documentary sources, but was heavily affected by nineteenth--century building development so there are relatively few surviving buildings from before 1700. Our evidence for the urban landscape therefore comes from a painstaking reconstruction of properties using sources such as property deeds, plans of houses, and maps. There are also some photographs of the buildings in the area as they were in the nineteenth century before demolition. This reconstruction was

[20] M.J. Power, 'The Social Topography of Restoration London', in A.L. Beier and R. Finlay, *London 1500-1700: the making of the metropolis* (London, 1986), pp. 199-203; Guillery, 'Houses in London's Suburbs', pp. 134-47.

[21] M.J. Power, 'East London Housing in the Seventeenth Century', in *Crisis and Order in English Towns 1500-1700*, ed. P. Clark and P. Slack (London, 1972), pp. 237-52.

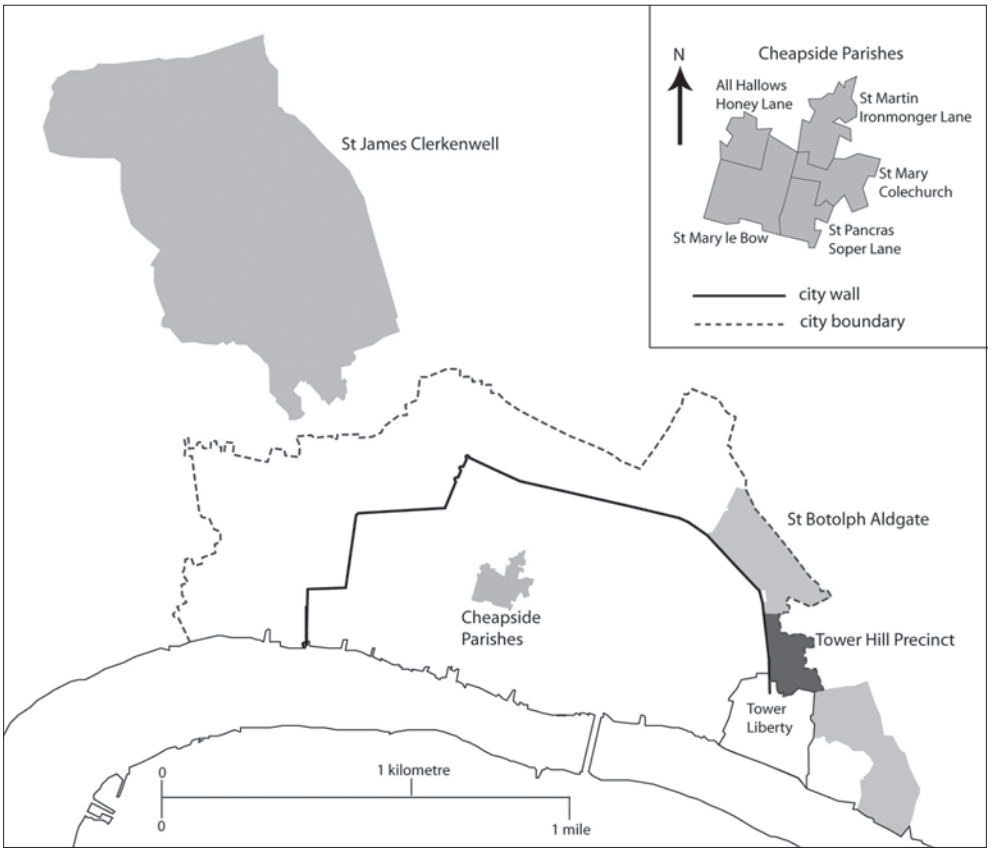


Fig 8. Map showing the study areas of Cheapside, Aldgate and Clerkenwell. (Centre for Metropolitan History).

undertaken for a research project, 'Life in the Suburbs', which ran from 2008-11.[22] This was the third in a series of projects undertaken from 2003 onwards, and which attempted to address some major questions concerning the social, economic and physical development of London in the period c. 1500-c.1700.[23] One of the aims of the 'Life in the Suburbs' project was to compare the characteristics of this area to the city centre, looking at its population and occupations, as well as the quality and type of housing in these areas. In this sense the project built upon earlier projects,

[22] For details of the project, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, see http://www.history.ac.uk/projects/research/life-in-the-suburbs. [Date accessed: 25 May 2014].

[23] The two earlier projects were: 'People in Place: Families, households and housing in London 1550-172' (Arts and Humanities Research Council, APN 16429, 2003-6), and 'Housing, environments and health in London, 1550-1750' (funded by the Wellcome Trust, 2006-8). For details see: http://www.history.ac.uk/cmh/pip/ [date accessed 25 May 2014].

such as the study of Cheapside described above, and two other projects based at the Centre for Metropolitan History which had developed the methodology. Central to this methodology was, first of all, the use of a combination of 'cross-sectional' sources – such as taxation records and surveys – with 'longitudinal' data, principally derived from parish registers and property deeds. Some of the taxation sources are very important for our knowledge of London and its inhabitants. The Hearth Tax listed the head of household and a number of hearths for that household, providing historians with a rough proxy for wealth and the size of housing. The recent publication of the 1666 returns for London demonstrates its value, as well as the care needed in using them.[24] Even more important are the returns for the 1695 Marriage Duty Assessment, which not only include the head of household both also other residents, including servants, apprentices and lodgers.[25] These sources have enabled the research team to reconstruct the population and the history of the buildings they lived in, revealing a huge amount about the socio-economic and environmental characteristics of the suburb. Essential to the project was the construction of a large, complex, relational database to contain and analyse the data. The project has resulted in a number of publications, which address a wide range of issues, including household structure and poor relief.[26]

A central concern of the 'Life in the Suburbs' project has been to study the impact of the very significant demographic and environmental changes which took place in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. During this period the population of the parish grew from an estimated *c*.3,500 inhabitants in 1540, over 11,000 by 1650, to nearly 20,000 by 1700.[27] As the Braun and Hogenberg view shows (Figure 1), by the mid sixteenth century there had been very little building beyond the main road east out of London (Aldgate High Street). The city ditch was still very much a feature of the urban landscape, with market gardening taking place adjacent to it. A century later things had changed dramatically, as Ogilby and Morgan's map of 1676 shows (Figure 9). Two north-south roads had been built which then formed the basis of a lot of in-filling to the south of the main highway. The nature of this in-filling was characteristically unplanned and ad hoc. Even in the late sixteenth

[24] *London and Middlesex Hearth Tax*, ed. Davies et al.

[25] For the use of the Marriage Duty returns for calculating household size see especially P. Baker and M. Merry, '"For the house her self and one servant": family and household in late seventeenth-century London', *London Journal*, 34 (2009), pp. 205-232.

[26] E.g. P. Baker and M. Merry, '"The poore lost a good Frend and the parish a good Neighbour": the lives of the poor and their supporters in London's eastern suburb, *c*.1583-*c*.1679, in M. Davies and J.A. Galloway (eds), *London and Beyond: Essays in Honour of Derek Keene* (London, 2012), pp. 155-180; Merry and Baker, '"For the house her self and one servant"', pp. 205-232.

[27] Based on analysis of the 1695 taxation records, plus parish register data.

Fig. 9. J. Ogilby and W. Morgan, *A Large and Accurate Map of the City of London* (1676). © The Trustees of the British Museum.

century this had been taking place and Stow had observed that, previously, to the south of the main highway:

> were some few tenements thinly scattered, here & there, with many voyd spaces between them, vp to the Bars, but now that street is not only fully replenished with buildings outward, & also pestered with diuerse Allyes, on eyther side to the Barres, but to white Chappell and beyond.[28]

The courts and alleyways noted by Stow are shown on the seventeenth-century maps, and were characteristic of the in-filling which took place.

So, what was the physical landscape like? How was the appearance and quality of the buildings affected by such rapid urban growth and by the nature of the population?

Inhabitants lived in vastly different types of properties in dramatically contrasting conditions. In earlier centuries, the rich who chose to build their houses in the area normally did so well away from the main street frontages – and thus far from its poorer residents. From the sixteenth and seventeenth century, however, the more substantial men of the parish were also living in large properties of two or three stories on Aldgate High Street, St Botolph's principal highway. Meanwhile, the suburb was beginning to change because of the influx of migrants, new industries and increasing numbers of poor residents. It is not correct, however to characterise the suburb as being dominated by the poor: an early seventeenth century list of inhabitants included 'carpenters bricklaiers, plaisterers coopers, smiths butchers, Chandlers keep[er]s of sylk mylls, Priests schoolmrs, victulers brokers & Diuers officers to ye Kinges Matie, & ye Cittie'.[29] Nevertheless, the growing population put pressure on the available space, and by the early seventeenth century the parish was becoming dominated by small dwellings, with low rental values, compared with other parts of London. Indeed, by the seventeenth century, and within London as a whole, the parish had one of the lowest modal rental values of properties, one of the smallest proportion of substantial houses, and an overwhelming preponderance of small dwellings.[30]

Characteristic of the parish's properties, were small two to three storey houses on the street frontage with small gardens behind, such as 140-141 Houndsditch, shown in Figure 10, surveyed by Ralph Treswell in 1607. Both were around 12 feet (3.7m) wide and 20 feet (6.1m) deep, with gardens about 50 feet (15.2m) long. Each had two rooms on the ground floor, a shop at the front of the property and kitchen behind, and two chambers on the second floor and a garret. One had a shed in the garden and both had privies. A series of later plans allow us to chart

---

[28] J. Stow, 'Survey of London' http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=60029. [Date accessed: 24 May 2014].

[29] Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Rawlinson D796B, fol. 85.

[30] D. Keene, 'The Poor and their neighbours', Centre for Metropolitan History, typescript, p. 2.

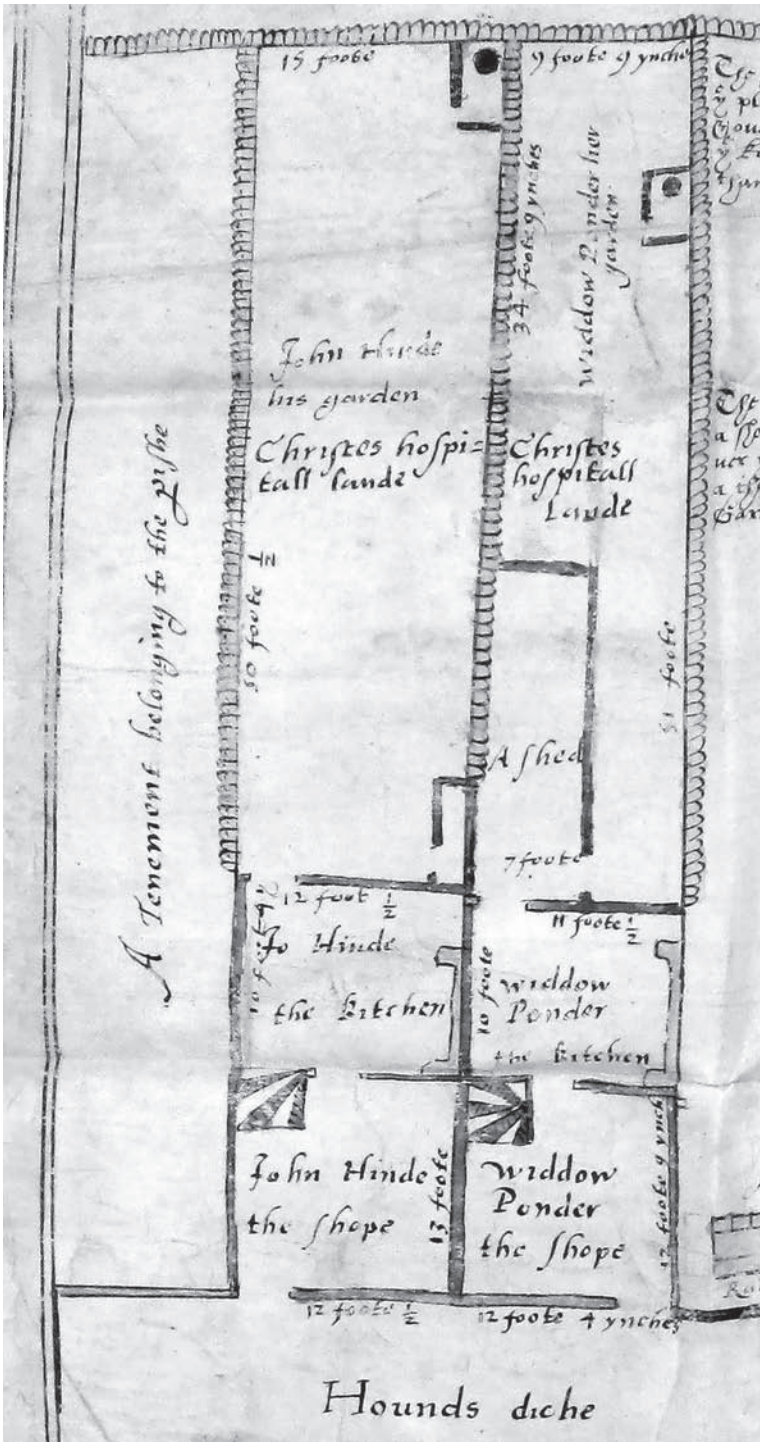


Fig. 10.
Plan of 140-141 Houndsditch in 1607, Guildhall Library, MS 13,443 (now at London Metropolitan Archives). By kind permission of Christ's Hospital Foundation.

how these sites and the properties on them evolved over time. By 1667 (Figure 11), the shop and kitchen of the property on the right had both been extended and a washhouse had been built at the bottom of the yard. However, it now seems that the site on the left contains two separate properties. The original 1607 property now has a buttery and washhouse, while a second dwelling, consisting of a shed and kitchen with stairs to a second floor has been built at the bottom of the former garden. All these properties were destroyed by fire in 1714 but quickly rebuilt in a substantially different form.[31] These Houndsditch properties were probably typical of the small houses occupied by those in the middle rank of St Botolph's society in the early modern period, those who were neither wealthy nor poor, possessed craft skills and capital with which to set themselves up, and worked for themselves rather than others.

In sharp contrast, many, perhaps most, of the parish's poor inhabitants lived in single room accommodation. The reasons for this lay partly in the fact that new building was centred in areas around the evolving alleys, closes and courts that sprang up between main thoroughfares – the type of in-filling described above and seen on contemporary maps. This meant that the space to build into was defined by existing rows of housing and that building over those interconnecting spaces became an established practice. All this contributed to the ad hoc building of small dwellings designed around a single room per storey. Indeed, piecemeal development undertaken by tenants or under-tenants rather than freeholders, appears to have been the norm throughout the parish. One example comes from a house in the Minories, which occupied a site about 40 feet (12.2m) wide and 400 feet (122m) long around 1500. Sometime after, the house was divided into two, and by 1523 there were five houses on the plot. By 1600, a further three smaller houses had been erected in the yard behind, and with a number of gardens to the rear. One of the gardens contained a still house, which by the 1660s had been converted into a two-storey dwelling. The other garden plots were then built on, and by 1700 the whole plot had been divided into a series of discrete house and yard or garden units. Clearly, for St Botolph's more wealthy residents, there was money to be made through such practices, and the record of a property surveyed in East Smithfield in 1612 reveals that Arthur Parker, the leaseholder, had just built a row of outhouses and garden houses known as Parkers Alley.[32]

Another example of this piecemeal pattern of development comes from Three Kings Court (Table 1), one of many alleys that led off the main streets of Aldgate. In this case

[31] '140-141 Houndsditch', http://sas-space.sas.ac.uk/4696/1/LITS_Property_History_Narratives_(Sample).pdf. [date accessed 25 May 2014].

[32] Keene, 'Poor and their neighbours', p. 8.

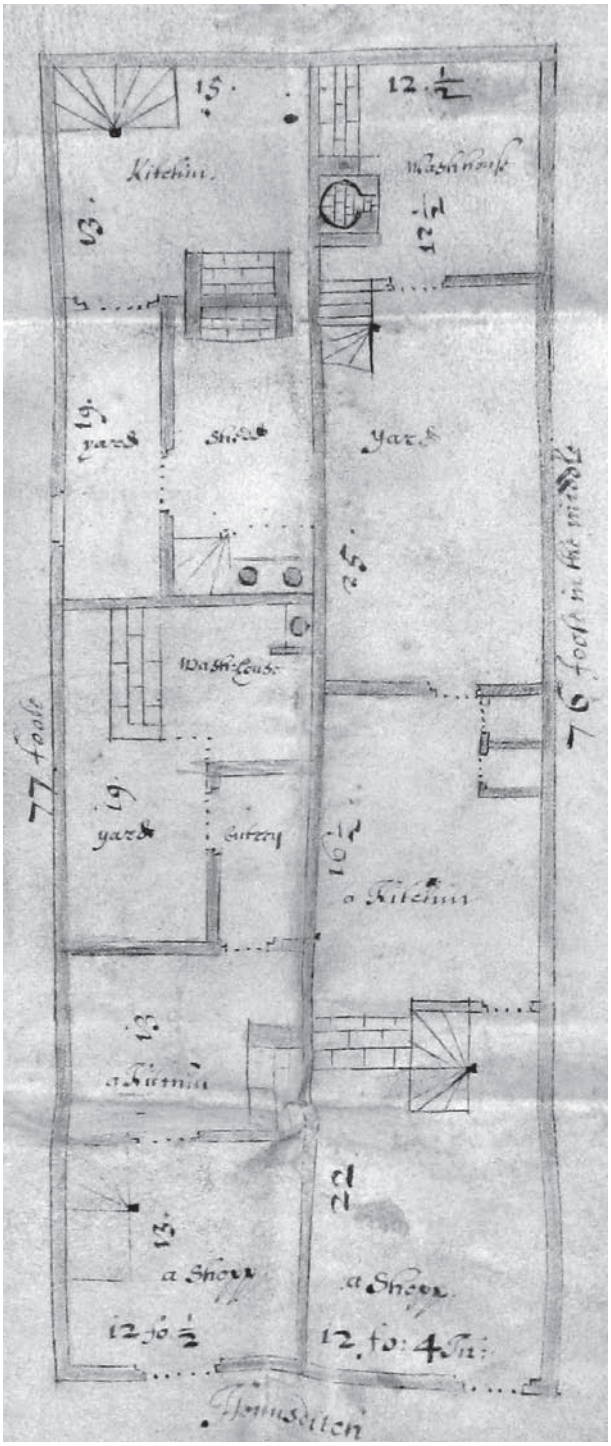


Fig. 11.
Plan of 140-141 Houndsditch in 1667, Guildhall Library, MS 13,443 (now at London Metropolitan Archives). By kind permission of Christ's Hospital Foundation.

we are fortunate to be able to use a combination of estate plans with other documentary sources which tells about the inhabitants as well as the buildings themselves.

Table 1. Development of Three Kings Court, The Minories

c.1584	alley created out of a garden at the back of a property
1632	13 tenements around a common yard
1637	13 tenements housed 22 households
1666	30 households listed

Like other alleys, Three Kings Court was created from a garden in the late sixteenth century, and then by the 1630s it was effectively a yard with a number of tenements built around it. One of our key sources is the returns from a survey of divided houses in the City of London carried out by the government in 1637, which portrays the over-crowding of some of the suburbs in great detail. These show that there were 22 households living in those 13 tenements in the 1630s, reminding us that buildings were frequently occupied by more than one household because of the pressures on space, leading to subdivisions in individual properties. Indeed, the Hearth Tax returns of 1666 show that there were now no fewer than 30 households crammed into this space.[33] High levels of cohabitation in the parish were determined by two other factors: those of taking in inmates and of the number of divided houses. Both practices were banned at various points by the national government, concerned about their potential for attracting poorer and less desirable families and individuals to London.[34] Inmate families lived alongside the existing occupants of a property, sharing a common entrance with any other occupants of the house. Meanwhile, the practice of dividing a house involved making physical changes to the arrangement of the house itself, namely creating separate living spaces with their own doors that were entirely closed off from one another.[35] A further consequence of this pressure on housing was the development of a specific type of single-room house in some parts of the suburb with a new sort of plan – with the staircase towards the front, just inside the entrance. This was purpose-built for multiple occupancy and had similarities with tenements being built in cities such as Paris and Edinburgh at the time.[36]

These examples have demonstrated some of the ways in which documentary and material evidence can enable us to reconstruct the effects of rapid urbanisation and population growth on an early modern London surburb. Indeed we are fortunate to be able to use an array of cross-sectional sources to be able to put people inside these buildings at various points in their histories, enabling us to study the urban

[33] V. Harding, 'Families and Housing in Seventeenth-Century London', *Parergon*, 24 (2007), pp. 131-2.

[34] W.C. Baer, 'Housing for the lesser sort in Stuart London: Findings from certificates and returns of divided houses', *London Journal* 33 (2008), pp. 71, 76.

[35] Keene, 'Poor and their neighbours', typescript, p. 6; Baer, 'Housing for the lesser sort in Stuart London'.

[36] Guillery, 'Houses in London's suburbs', pp. 140-1.

household in more detail. Looking more broadly, it is possible to summarise some of the main trends in the physical development of the eastern suburb, and in doing so to present a more nuanced picture of the similarities and differences between the suburbs and the city centre.

First, there was undoubtedly a very active property market in the area, caused by the rapid rise in population and demand for housing. It affected different parts of the suburb in different ways. There was clearly a great deal of uncoordinated and piecemeal development, especially away from the main streets where there was huge pressure to build on open spaces. So we can see plots being subdivided to create new houses, and houses themselves being subdivided in order to cope with multiple families and households.

Next, these uncoordinated building booms also led to a sharp distinction in the nature of building use between the city and the suburbs. In poorer, more industrial areas such as Aldgate, houses tended to be lower-quality, smaller buildings with fewer storeys than those in central city areas, with plans designed around a single room per storey. The reasons for this lay partly in the fact that new building was centred in areas around the evolving alleys and courts that sprang up between main thoroughfares. Landlords were quick to see an opportunity in a thriving housing market, some of the new building in the area was actually not new building at all. We have lots of evidence of the creation of new and habitations from old buildings, with structures such as stables, coach-houses, sheds and even privies converted for use as cheap domestic accommodation. This sort of 'shadow housing' can be found in many of London's rapidly expanding suburbs. However, we need to be careful not to take that too far, as the City centre parishes also had many alleyways and courtyards with small houses, behind the large houses on the main streets. Similarly, Aldgate had its share of larger houses.

What is perhaps most significant is the difference in the quality of housing being built. The nature of the population of the suburb – much of it poor, young, migrant – encouraged short-term development of poor quality housing, much of which had to be pulled down and replaced within a generation. It is worth noting that in the 1690s about 70% of houses in the northern and eastern suburbs were less than 30 years old. Leases were generally short and houses were not expected to last.[37] All of this meant that there was little architectural uniformity – buildings were put up and pulled down within a generation or so, often by speculators who were responding to very high demand for housing from a rapidly rising suburban population. [38]

---

[37] Guillery, 'Houses in London's Suburbs', pp. 134-47.

[38] Data from the project is available for consultation at http://discover.ukdataservice.ac.uk/catalogue?sn=7244 [date accessed 25 May 2014]. Detailed findings from the project can be found via the project web page at http://www.history.ac.uk/projects/research/life-in-the-suburbs [date accessed: 25 May 2014].

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ADAMS, J. Q., 'The Conventual Buildings of Blackfriars, London, and the Playhouses Constructed There', *Studies in Philology*, 14 (1917), p. 65-87.

BAER, W. C., 'Housing for the lesser sort in Stuart London: Findings from certificates and returns of divided houses', *London Journal* 33 (2008), p. 71-76.

BAKER, P. and MERRY, M., '"For the house her self and one servant": family and household in late seventeenth-century London', *London Journal*, 34 (2009), p. 205-232.

BAKER, P. and MERRY, M., '"The poore lost a good Frend and the parish a good Neighbour": the lives of the poor and their supporters in London's eastern suburb, c.1583-c.1679', in M. Davies and J.A. Galloway (eds), *London and Beyond: Essays in Honour of Derek Keene*, London, 2012, p. 155-180.

BARRON, C.M. et al. *The Parish of St Andrew Holborn*, London, 1979.

BOULTON, J., 'London 1540-1700', in *Cambridge Urban History of Britain* II, ed. P. Clark, Cambridge, 2000, p. 315-46.

CARLIN, M., *Medieval Southwark*, London, 1996.

FEUILLERAT, A., *Blackfriars Records, c. 1555-1609*, Malone Society Collections, 2, Oxford, 1913 (repr. 1985).

FIELD, Jacob F., 'Apprenticeship Migration to London from the North-East of England in the Seventeenth Century', *London Journal*, 35 (2010), p. 1-21;

GUILLERY, P., 'Houses in London's Suburbs', in *London and Middlesex Hearth Tax: Lady Day 1666*, ed. M. Davies, C. Ferguson, V. Harding and A. Wareham, British Record Society, 2014, p. 134-47.

HARDING, V., 'Reconstructing London before the Great Fire', *London Topographical Record* 25 (1985).

HARDING, V., 'The population of London, 1550 -1700: a review of the published evidence', *London Journal*, 15 (1990), p. 111-128.

HARDING, V., 'Early Modern London 1550-1700', *London Journal*, 20 (1995), p. 34-45.

HARDING, V., 'City, Capital and Metropolis: the Changing Shape of Seventeenth Century London', in *Imagining Early Modern London: Perceptions and Portrayals of the City from Stow to Strype, 1598-1720* ed. J.F.Merritt (Cambridge, 2001), p. 117-143.

HARDING, V., 'Families and Housing in Seventeenth-Century London', *Parergon*, 24 (2007), p. 131-132.

HARVEY, B.H., 'Westminster Abbey and Londoners, 1440-1540', *in London and the Kingdom: essays in honour of Caroline M. Barron,* Stamford, 2008, p. 12-37.

HAYWARD, M., 'The Great Wardrobe Accounts of Henry VII and Henry VIII', *London Record Society*, 47 (2012), introduction.

HOVLAND, S.R., *Apprenticeship in later medieval London, (c. 1300 - c. 1530)*, University of London PhD thesis, 2006.

KEENE, D., 'A new study of London before the Great Fire', *Urban History Yearbook*, 1984, p. 11-21.

KEENE, D., 'Wardrobes in the City: houses of consumption, finance and power', in M. Prestwich, R. Britnell and R. Frame (eds.), *Thirteenth-Century England VII*, Woodbridge, 1999, p. 61-79.

KEENE, D., 'Metropolitan comparisons: London as a city-state', *Historical Research*, 76 (2004), p. 459-80.

KEENE, D., 'The Poor and their neighbours', Centre for Metropolitan History, typescript: '140-141 Houndsditch', http://sas space.sas.ac.uk/4696/1/LITS_Property_History_Narratives_(Sample).pdf. [date accessed 25 May 2014]

POWER, M.J., 'East London Housing in the Seventeenth Century', in *Crisis and Order in English Towns 1500-1700*, ed. P. Clark and P. Slack, London, 1972, p. 237-52.

POWER, M.J., 'The Social Topography of Restoration London', in A.L. Beier and R. Finlay, *London 1500-1700: the making of the metropolis*, London, 1986, p. 199-203.

RAPPAPORT, S.R., *Worlds Within Worlds: structures of life in sixteenth century London*, Cambridge, 1989.

The Religious *Houses of London and Middlesex*, ed. C.M. Barron and M. Davies, London, 2008.

ROSSER, G., *Medieval Westminster*, Oxford, 1989.

SMUTS, R. Malcolm, 'The Court and Its Neighborhood: Royal Policy and Urban Growth in the Early Stuart West End', *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (Apr., 1991), p. 117-149.

STOW, J., *A Survey of London, Reprinted from the text of 1603*, London, 1912.

STOW, J., 'Survey of London' http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=60029. [Date accessed: 24 May 2014].

ABSTRACT London's physical and demographic expansion between 1500 and 1700 was dramatic. The population of the city and its suburbs grew from about 50,000 to almost half a million inhabitants. Almost all this increase was in the suburbs, particularly to the west, north and east of the walled city. These developments raise important questions about their effects upon the city's economy, population and the physical environment, especially in the expanding suburbs. The purpose of this paper is to examine the suburban growth of London, first of all setting out some of the main characteristics of this growth in the early modern period. Next the paper will draw on the results of some major research projects carried out by the Centre for Metropolitan History. These have integrated a range of longitudinal and cross-sectional sources, which survive in abundance for early modern London. These enable detailed 'micro-histories' to be written of individual properties and their occupants in sample areas of the city, which provide insights into themes such as household size, the physical size and layout of houses, and the changing urban landscape. The paper presents some conclusions arising from the research into the eastern area of Aldgate, which grew very dramatically in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. There was considerable demand for housing, and multiple occupancy was common and often achieved through the physical division of houses. As the area became built up, patterns can be seen in the development of gardens behind main street frontages into alley ways and courts, around which new tenements were constructed. Most of this was uncoordinated and re-use of older structures was common. On the other hand, the differences between the suburbs and the central parishes should not be over stated.

Keywords: London, Late Medieval and Modern, city and suburbs, changing urban landscape.

RESUMO A expansão física e demográfica de Londres entre 1500 e 1700 foi dramática. a população da cidade e dos seus subúrbios passou de cerca de 50.000 para quase meio milhão de habitantes. Quase todo esse aumento registou-se nos subúrbios extramuros, especialmente nas zonas oeste, norte e leste da cidade. Esta expansão levanta importantes questões sobre os seus efeitos na economia, na população e na paisagem urbana, especialmente nos subúrbios em crescimento. O objetivo deste trabalho é analisar o crescimento suburbano de Londres nos inícios da Época Moderna. Começaremos por definir algumas das suas principais características, para, de seguida, apresentar os resultados de alguns grandes projetos de investigação desenvolvidos pelo Centre for Metropolitan History, que utilizaram um conjunto de fontes longitudinais e transversais, que sobrevivem em abundância para o início do Período Moderno de Londres. Através da análise destas fontes foi possível escrever "micro-histórias" detalhadas de propriedades individuais e dos seus ocupantes em áreas de amostragem da cidade, que forneceram informações sobre temas como o tamanho da família, a dimensão física e arquitetura das casas, bem como as transformações da paisagem urbana. Este artigo apresenta algumas conclusões resultantes da investigação realizada na área leste de Aldgate, que cresceu dramaticamente nos séculos XVI e XVII. A procura de habitação era considerável, sendo comum a ocupação múltipla das casas, muitas vezes conseguida através da divisão física da habitação. À medida que a área construída foi aumentando, podem observar-se padrões no desenvolvimento de jardins por detrás das fachadas das ruas principais, bem como em becos e pátios, em torno dos quais surgiam novas construções. A maior parte deste processo desenvolveu-se de forma desordenada, sendo frequente a reutilização de anteriores estruturas. Por outro lado, as diferenças entre os subúrbios e as paróquias não devem ser exageradas.

Palavras-chaves: Londres, Baixa